

## **Chapter 7. Role of Parents, Administrators and the Community**

Strong foreign language programs are the result of the combined efforts of local school administrators and counselors, district administrators, school boards, state agencies, and the public. The students' classroom experience depends on how successfully these various members of the academic and local communities work in their diverse capacities to nurture foreign language instruction. The most important support from all groups is a genuine conviction that languages are of such critical value to California and to individual students that all students are strongly encouraged to learn at least one language in addition to their native language.

### ***Schools and Districts:***

Local school district and school administrators:

- Consider alignment of their foreign language improvement efforts with the state's framework and textbook adoption cycle;
- Allocate a fair proportion of available funds for proper staffing of foreign language departments, purchasing learning materials and equipment, and providing staff development;
- Provide a well-qualified curriculum specialist who understands and supports foreign language education;
- Establish conditions whereby only teachers competent in the languages and teaching are recruited, hired, assigned, and retained;
- Evaluate foreign language teachers by using criteria primarily based on the attainment of program objectives; and

- 1760 • Inform the governing board about critical foreign language needs.

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1762 ***Counselors:***

- 1763 • Recognize the rapidly increasing career value of studying a foreign language;
- 1764 • Encourage all students to begin the study of a second language as early as possible
- 1765 and to continue the study as long as possible;
- 1766 • Consult with the language staff about the placement of students in language classes;
- 1767 and
- 1768 • Advise students early about high school and college requirements regarding foreign
- 1769 languages

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1771 ***The school board:***

- 1772 • Recognizes the value of providing foreign language opportunities for all students;
- 1773 • Provides support for expanding foreign language programs until they span all grade
- 1774 levels in the district;
- 1775 • Establishes programs in uncommonly taught languages, especially those of the
- 1776 Pacific Rim;
- 1777 • Establishes and supports heritage language programs;
- 1778 • Supports professional growth by providing incentives such as recognition and
- 1779 financial assistance;
- 1780 • Ensures hiring practices that place only qualified teachers in foreign language
- 1781 classrooms;
- 1782 • Furnishes adequate funding for expanding programs and enrollment and for
- 1783 ensuring reasonable class size; and

- Facilitates students' participation in worthwhile learning experiences requiring travel and board approval.

***Students:***

All students need to study a foreign language and are capable of mastering another language. Students must recognize that learning and progressing in studying a foreign language requires dedication and determination. Mastering another language may not be easy, but its rewards are great and always evident whenever reading, writing, listening and speaking the language. Students can contribute to the effectiveness of the foreign language program by:

- Participating in class;
- Attending all classes and completing all assignments;
- Being determined to learn the language;
- Supporting other students and cooperating with the teacher;
- Being responsible for their own learning;
- Making full use of community resources, including language groups, native speakers, and peers who speak the target language; and
- Speaking, listening, writing, and reading in the language at every opportunity.

***Parents:***

Parents provide the most vital link between students and the community.

Parents can contribute to the effectiveness of the foreign language program by:

- Encouraging their children to study at least one language other than their own and supporting such study;
- Providing diverse linguistic and cultural models based on their own background;

- 1808 • Encouraging the establishment and growth of a variety of language programs at
- 1809 each grade level; and
- 1810 • Advocating for support of foreign languages instruction in their own community,
- 1811 professional, and political organizations.

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1813 ***Local Communities:***

1814 Many communities have resources valuable to language students and teachers. Native

1815 speakers of the target language often volunteer to help in the classroom. They coach

1816 students, make conversation, give talks, lead and stimulate small-group activities, and

1817 accompany classes on field trips. Teachers encourage members of the community to:

- 1818 • Serve as members of language booster groups;
- 1819 • Help teachers prepare instructional materials;
- 1820 • Serve as classroom aides;
- 1821 • Sponsor and help with extracurricular language activities;
- 1822 • Host visitors and exchange students from other countries;
- 1823 • Lobby elected officials on behalf of language programs;
- 1824 • Serve on school-organized task forces formed to make recommendations about
- 1825 language training;
- 1826 • Help students with homework assignments;
- 1827 • Persuade community organizations and service clubs to sponsor, support, or
- 1828 publicize projects benefiting foreign language education; and
- 1829 • Serve as resources for authentic target-language experiences.

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***Business and Industry:***

Support for foreign language and international education programs is in the best interest of most businesses. Effective foreign language programs in the schools take the initiative in forming alliances with firms located in the community. Cooperative efforts lead to:

- Technical assistance and equipment for classroom use;
- Financial support for scholarships, language camps and field days, and student-exchange programs;
- Internships for foreign language and other language students;
- Public awareness campaigns to advocate additional study of foreign languages and cultures;
- Contacts with agencies and people in other countries;
- Speakers to motivate and inform language students; and
- Support from governing boards and politicians for language education.